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PERMANENT COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

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**Testimony of
Natasha M. Pierre
Associate Legislative Analyst
The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women
Before the
Select Committee on Aging
Thursday, February 23, 2006**

**In support of
S.B. 103, AAC Expansion of the State Funded Pilot Program Providing Personal
Care Services for Persons Sixty-Five of Age or Older**

Good morning Senator Harris, Representative Feltman and members of the committee. My name is Natasha Pierre and I am the Associate Legislative Analyst for the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women. Today, I am testifying on behalf of the PCSW and the Connecticut Women's Health Campaign (CWHC), which is a statewide coalition of organizations representing consumers, providers and policy experts with particular interests in women's health and access to health care. We support S.B. 103 AAC Expansion of the State Funded Pilot Program Providing Personal Care Services for Persons Sixty-Five of Age or Older, which would expand the services of the state funded personal care assistance pilot to an additional 50 individuals, totaling 200 persons.

The PCSW and CWHC support this proposal because there is a growing population of elders who will increasingly rely on services that help them remain independent and in their communities. The fastest growing cohort of this population consists of women who are 85 or older. The 2000 Census shows that 46,341 women age 85 and over resided in

Connecticut. This number is projected to increase by nearly a third in the year 2010 to 72,515. The number of people with disabilities also continues to grow - according to the latest US census 19% of all people have disabilities.

The U. S. Supreme Court ruling in Olmstead v. L. C.¹ mandates that services be available to meet the needs of such persons wishing to live in the community. Connecticut's Long-Term Care Plan specifically states, "The overall goal for Connecticut's long-term care system should be to offer individuals the services and supports of their choice in the least restrictive setting." But more importantly than either of these directives is the desire of our elders and people with disabilities to remain independent through self-directed care in a community setting.

We thank you for your attention and urge your support of S.B. 103.

¹ Olmstead v. L. C., 119 S. Ct. 2176 (1999).

